

McCann Road Committee  
Aug10, 2009

Board of Clark County Commissioners  
1300 Franklin, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Vancouver, WA 98666-5000

Commissioners Boldt, Mielke, and Stuart,

McCann Road Committee is a group of West Felida home owners who have joined together to address traffic safety and a Level-of-Service 'F' (failing) at the intersection of McCann Rd and NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue and a Level-of-Service 'C' at the intersection of NW 131<sup>st</sup> Street and NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

The area surrounding McCann Road has been a prime area for development. Although McCann is designated a 'circulator' road, it functions as the defacto collector for the area. However, McCann and nearby roads have not been improved to keep pace with ongoing development. The current 'West Felida Circulation Plan' was drafted in the mid-nineties. Since then, the homes served by McCann Road have increased four-fold, from 106 to 399. We anticipate continued development will result in 786 homes at full build out, pursuant to existing zoning. This is a seven fold increase from 1995. Over the same period there has been no material improvement to McCann, nor do we know of any plans to improve McCann.

We request the Board of Commissioners direct county staff to update the 'West Felida Circulation Plan'. There are four primary issues we desire county staff to investigate-- safety on the eastern end of McCann associated with two curves; the level-of-service 'F' and 'C' at the intersections of 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue with McCann and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue with 131<sup>st</sup> Street respectively; upgrading the intersection at McCann and 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue; and changing McCann's designation from 'circulator' to 'collector'.

Our committee is happy to provide additional information if requested. We are also prepared to serve as a sounding board for county staff during the process of updating the West Felida Circulation Plan.

Sincerely,  
McCann Road Committee and West Felida Homeowners.

*(Included with the letter was a signature page of 81 names, collected primarily from residents living near the conjunctions of McCann Rd, NW 131<sup>st</sup> Street, and NW 36<sup>th</sup> Ave. intersections. This comment appended April 17, 2010)*

# McCann Road Background, Summary of Issues, And Initial Ideas for County Staff to Investigate.

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## 1. Background:

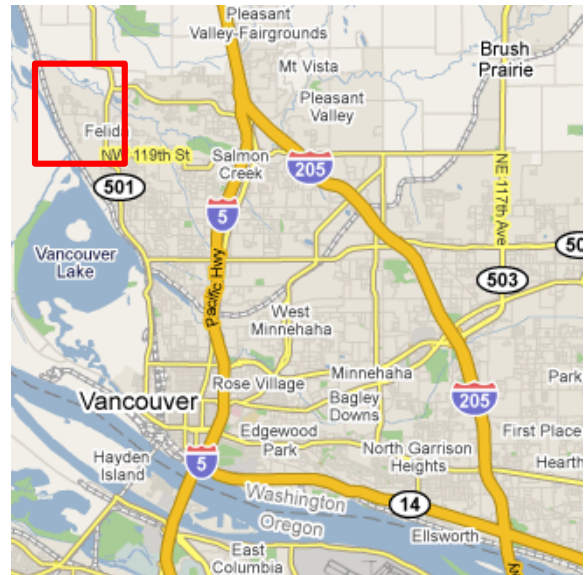
McCann Road and the neighborhood it serves lies in West Felida. For traffic planning, McCann Road is part of the 'West Felida Circulation Plan'. McCann is currently designated as a circulator road, although in practice it functions as the defacto collector for residents within the boundary of figure 2.

Table 1 shows the number of homes served by McCann. The current home count was determined from aerial photographs (google), augmented by a physical count in the newest subdivisions.

The current circulation plan for West Felida was updated in the mid-nineties, around the time of the first approval process for the Ashley Heights development. At that time, we estimate McCann served 106 homes, plus the Clark County Waste-Water treatment facility. The traffic department, at the request of the McCann residents, designated McCann a 'circulator' road. Since the mid-nineties, neither the West Felida circulation plan, nor the designation of McCann as a circulator road has changed.

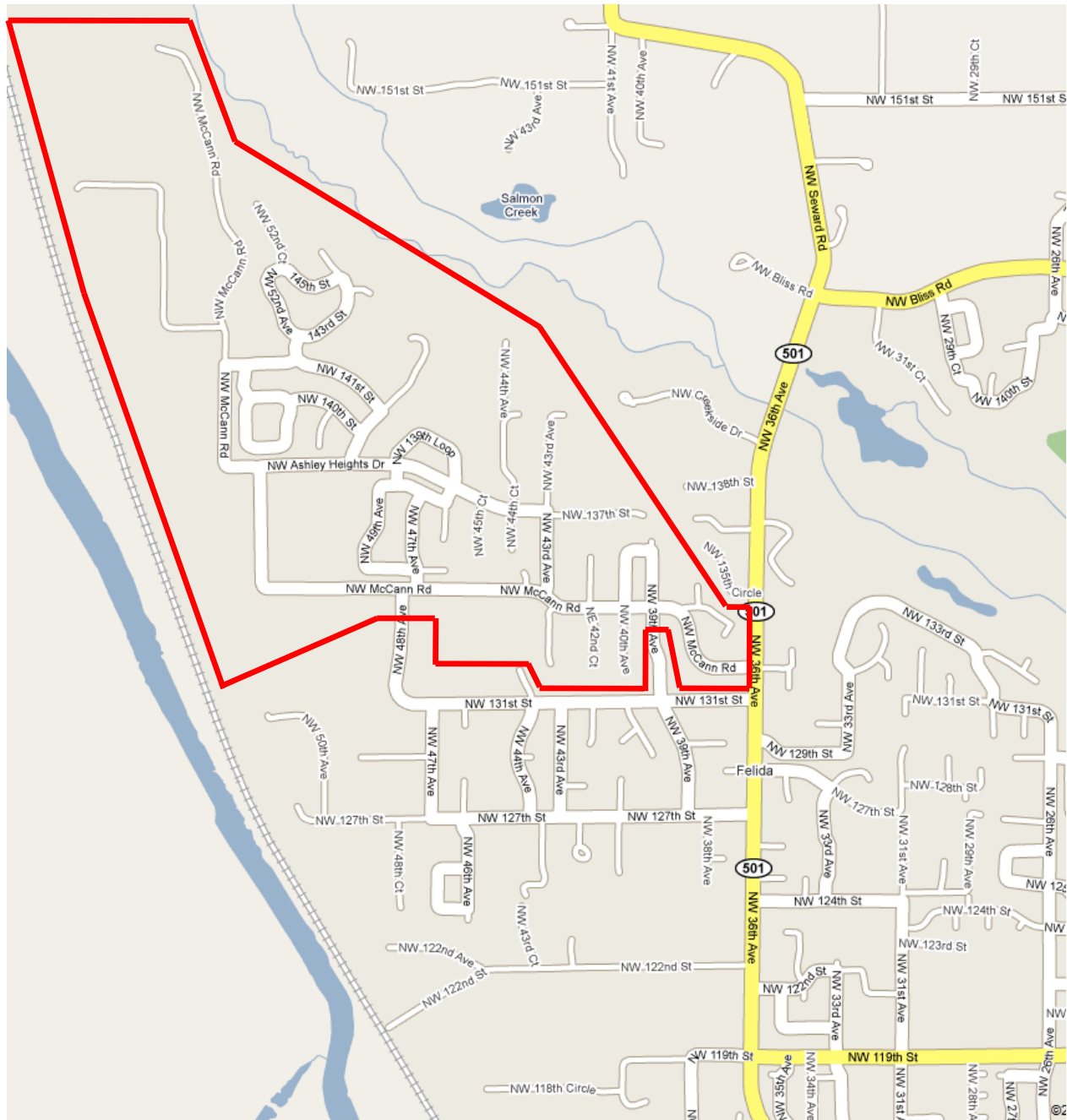
By 2009, the homes served by McCann had increased to 399 (table 1). Counting approved developments, McCann road will serve 527 homes. We estimate the complete build out of McCann area pursuant to existing zoning will result in 785 residential homes, the Waste-Water Treatment Facility, and potentially one new school.

Vancouver School District currently owns 10 acres at the McCann site shown in Figure 3. This site is intended for an elementary school when nearby schools (Felida, Chinook, and Lakeshore) reach capacity. For traffic planning purposes we should provide contingencies for this elementary school.

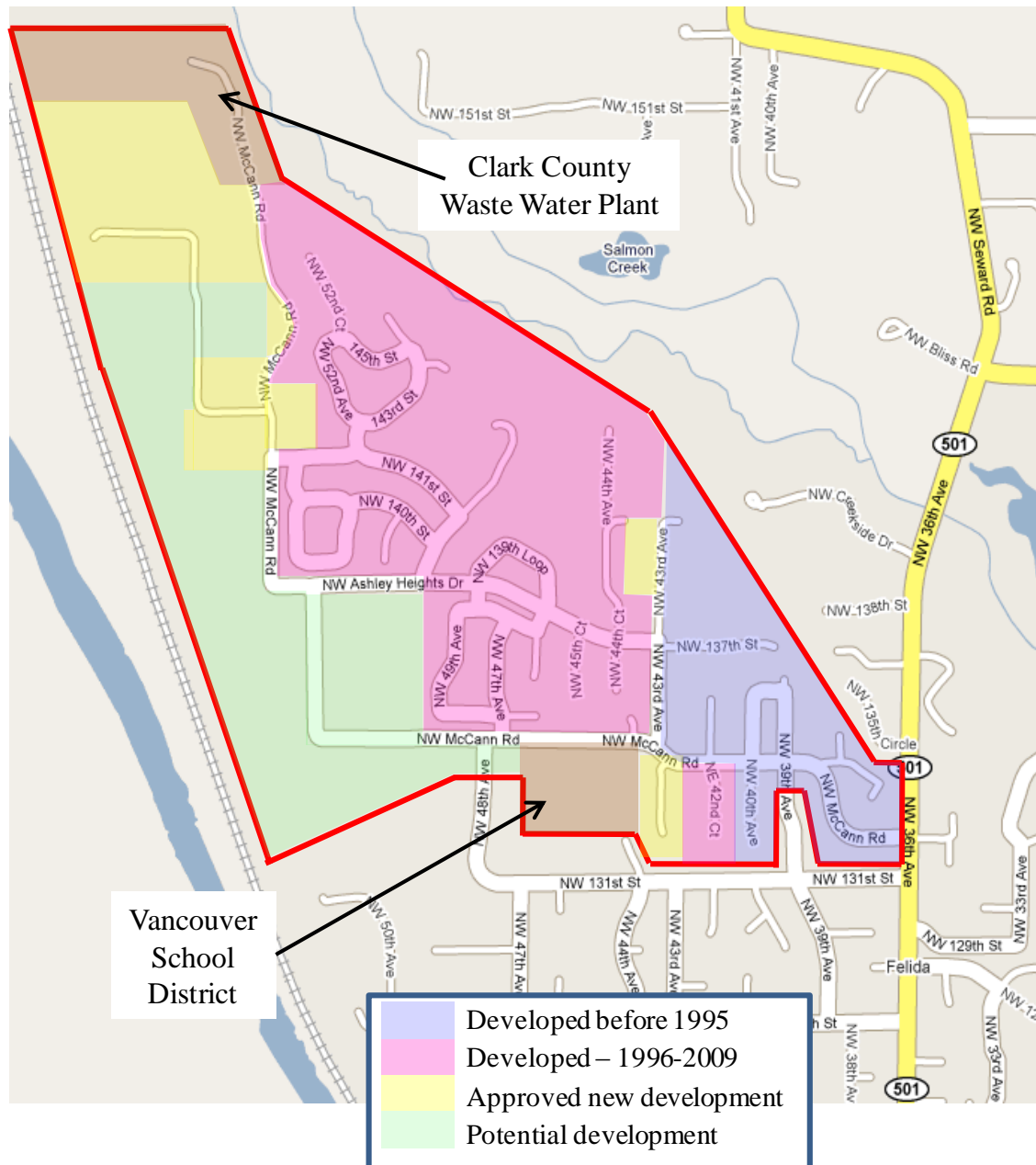


Area of the 'West Felida Circulation Plan'

Over the last 15 years, the homes served by McCann have grown almost four-fold (106 to 399). Yet there have been no significant improvements in McCann. We anticipate a further doubling of homes over the next 15 years (399 to 785). Now is an appropriate time for Clark County to investigate traffic issues with McCann Road, nearby 131<sup>st</sup> and 127<sup>th</sup> Streets, and update the West Felida circulation plan to support future growth.



**Figure 2 – McCann Road serves as the defacto collector for the area shown above.**



**Figure 3 –McCann development verses time.**

**Table 1- Homes in the McCann area (within the boundary of fig 3).**

~1995	Last Circulation Plan update. (Blue area + scattered homesteads)	106
2009	Current homes. (Add pink area)	399
2009	Current & approved homes. (Add yellow area)	527
~2020-25	Complete build-out of farm land and empty lots. (Add green area)	786



## 2. Issue of Safety

Safety is always an issue when traffic densities increase fourfold. However, the curves on McCann Road between 36<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Avenue have inherent safety concerns that go beyond traffic volume. Safety on these curves was the topic of a prior letter written by McCann homeowner Tara Johnson and signed by 53 residential homeowners living near these curves. Mrs. Johnson's letter is attached, along with a traffic study and letter of response from Commissioner Stuart.

The first curve traveling west on McCann from 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue is the biggest concern. Visibility is limited due to residential homes, landscaping, and terrain. The posted speed is 20 mph. Unfortunately, McCann not only serves as a defacto collector road, but it is considered a collector road in the minds of commuters. The actual driving speeds along McCann Road are comparable to those of 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The county measured a typical speed (50 percentile) of 28mph, and a prevailing speed (85<sup>th</sup> percentile) of 32mph. Adding to the problem is a high density of residential homes, driveways, and road-side mailboxes. Furthermore, the grade of the road (traveling west) around the first curve is downhill, increasing the minimum stopping distance. If one wished to design an unsafe corner, it would have all of these characteristics: curving corners promoting higher speeds, a downhill grade, limited visibility, and local residents crossing the street and backing out of driveways in their normal course of daily life.



**Figure 4. The curves on McCann between 36<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Avenues**

Historical traffic accident data does not suggest these curves are a problem. However, our concern is not accidents between vehicles, but the less common and more serious risk of an accident between a vehicle and pedestrians. Pedestrians cannot see traffic around these curves, and must rely on their sense of hearing to cross the road. This is an inherent safety problem.

### **3. Issue of Level-of-Service at McCann/36<sup>th</sup> Avenue.**

The most recent ‘Type III Development & Environmental Review’ within the area served by McCann is the Ashley Ridge Subdivision. (Case Number PLD208-00057, Issued Jan. 28, 2009). This review, Finding 19 – Site Access, states:

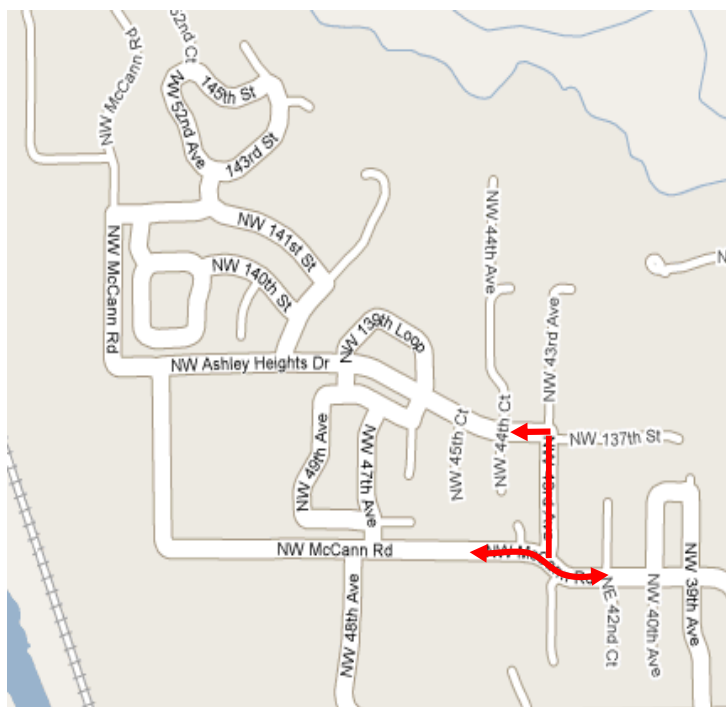
“The traffic study indicates that the intersections of NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue/NW McCann Road and NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue/NW 131<sup>st</sup> Street, will have an estimated LOS F and an estimated LOS C, respectively, through the 2012 build-out horizon.”

We concur that these intersections are a problem. Unfortunately, because McCann is designated a ‘circulator’, there is currently no plan to improve the level-of-service at either of these two intersections.

### **4. Issue of intersection at McCann/43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue.**

A second problem intersection is McCann and 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue. This intersection handles the convergence of traffic from Ashley Heights Drive (the main road within Ashley Heights subdivision) and McCann Road. This intersection was planned for improvement in conjunction with the Ashley Heights development however this plan was never executed.

Problems and proposed improvements at this intersection were detailed in a letter of Feb. 7, 2009 from Bob Ellingwood (letter is attached). The issues include limited visibility due to the s-curves in McCann; a 10 foot jog in 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue where the developed section adjacent to Ashley Heights turns into the original county road; no curbs, sidewalks, or room for



**Figure 5 – Intersection of McCann and 43<sup>rd</sup>**

pedestrians on the older section of 43<sup>rd</sup>; inadequate system for storm water drainage, including ditches which overflow and flood 43<sup>rd</sup>. Additionally, during the last year at least three vehicles turning north from McCann Road to NW 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue have incurred flat tires (both right front and rear tires) as a result of striking the defective storm water catch basin located at this intersection. These incidents have been reported to Clark County road maintenance but the defective catch basin has not been corrected.

New McCann developments are west of this intersection. Additional traffic from these new developments will either use Ashley Heights Drive or McCann. Either way, all traffic from new developments is funneled through this intersection.

It now seems unlikely that any new developer will be tasked with improving this intersection. We believe Clark County should take proactive responsibility for this intersection otherwise further development will only serve to aggravate these problems.

## **5. Issue of McCann designated a ‘circulator’ road.**

McCann is currently designated a circulator road, although it serves as a defacto collector. This improper designation defeats the goals of the County’s development and planning processes. If McCann were recognized as a ‘collector’, then County Staff would be making different decisions concerning traffic impact. An update to the West Felida Circulation Plan should include a change of McCann Road to a ‘collector’.

## **6. Traffic Alternatives for Study**

This section lists potential solutions to improve safety, improve the level of service, and provide for the continued build out of areas served by McCann Rd. We assume that our county’s civil engineering staff will fill in the necessary details. Of course we are open to variations on these ideas, mixtures of multiple ideas, and entirely new ideas. However, we request Clark County study each of these proposed improvements.

### **6.1 Improvements to McCann Rd.**

These alternatives would directly improve McCann Rd.

6.1.1 Rebuild and grading of intersection of McCann and 36<sup>th</sup> Ave, including the buyout of nearby homes as necessary.

6.1.2 Removal or reduction of first McCann S-curve, between 36<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Avenues, including the buyout of nearby homes as necessary.

## **6.2 Traffic constraints on McCann Rd.**

These alternatives would put constraints on McCann's traffic and 'force' people to find alternative routes. We recognize that traffic density on nearby Streets, especially 131<sup>st</sup> and 127<sup>th</sup> Streets may potentially be increased. Therefore, these alternatives should include a comprehensive study of nearby roads, with the goal to optimize the entire system and provide an acceptable Level-of-Service throughout.

6.2.1 McCann Rd. made 1-way westbound, from 36<sup>th</sup> to 39<sup>th</sup> Ave, with eastbound McCann traffic forced to take an alternative route such as south on 39<sup>th</sup> Ave, then east on 131<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.2.2 Right turn only from McCann eastbound, to NW 36<sup>th</sup> southbound.

6.2.3 Illegal left turn from NW 36<sup>th</sup> northward, to McCann Rd. west.

6.2.4 Restriction of county controlled truck traffic to the water treatment plant, forcing trucks to a predefined alternative route.

6.2.5 Signal lights at McCann/36<sup>th</sup>, 131<sup>st</sup> Street/36<sup>th</sup>, and/or 127<sup>th</sup> Street/36<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

## **6.3 Traffic Alternatives to McCann Rd.**

These alternatives 'encourage' people to take roads suitable for a safer and smooth flow of traffic. The best east-west alternatives to McCann are NW 131<sup>st</sup> and NW 127<sup>th</sup> Streets. However, the current system of roads discourages the north-south movement of traffic between 127<sup>th</sup> Street, 131<sup>st</sup> Street, and McCann Road. There are multiple instances where the primary north-south avenues are not aligned or not connected. Roughly half of the options listed here require a new north-south avenue.

We assume existing avenues, 131<sup>st</sup> Street, or 127<sup>th</sup> Street may require upgrades and traffic flow modifications to maintain an acceptable Level-of-Service throughout the entire system. We also assume that any new roads and the realignment of existing roads are contingent on being acceptable to the affected land owners.

Convenient alternatives to McCann Road are perhaps the most significant 'lost opportunity' over the last decade. Development since 1995 has significantly restricted the options and placed new homes in areas where we would now desire a north-south connection. Therefore, we urge Clark County to explore alternative routes now, before future development further restricts our practical options.

Near-Term possible alternatives:

6.3.1 Alternate route: McCann, 39<sup>th</sup> Ave, to 131<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.3.2 Alternate route: McCann, 39<sup>th</sup> Ave, to 127<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.3.3 Alternate route: McCann, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave South (improved), to 131<sup>st</sup> Street.



6.3.4 Alternate route: McCann, 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave South (improved), to 44<sup>th</sup> Ave, to 127<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.3.4 Alternate route: Ashley Heights Dr to 137<sup>th</sup> St. to 39<sup>th</sup> Ave. (new road).

6.3.5 Alternate route: McCann, 44<sup>rd</sup> Ave South (new road), to 131<sup>st</sup> Street.

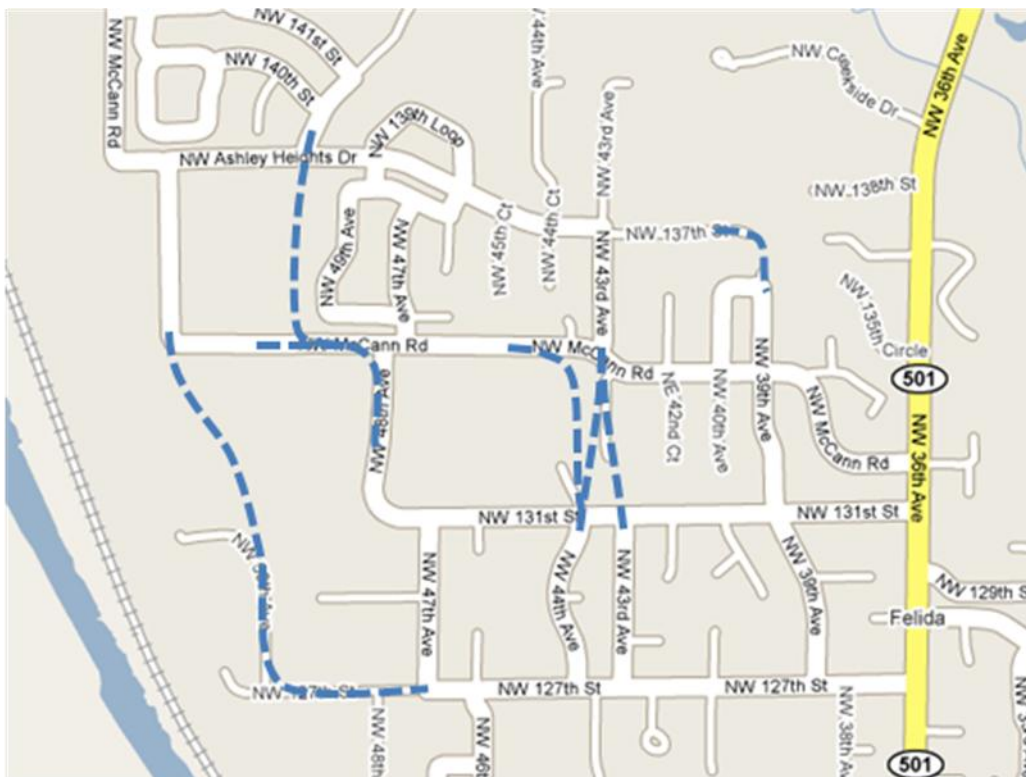
6.3.6 Alternate route: McCann, 44<sup>rd</sup> Ave South (new road), to 127<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.3.7 Alternate route: McCann, 48<sup>th</sup> Ave South, to 131<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.3.8 Alternate route: McCann, 48<sup>th</sup> Ave South, to 47<sup>th</sup> Ave South, to 127<sup>st</sup> Street.

6.3.9 Alternate route: Extending 50<sup>th</sup> Avenue in Ashley Heights, south across an open field and buried gas pipeline, connecting with McCann, and rounding the corner at McCann and 48<sup>th</sup> avenue.

6.3.10 Alternate route: McCann, to new road cutting south through Herzog farm and connecting to 127<sup>th</sup> or 131<sup>st</sup> Streets. This is a longer term alternative (when the farm is developed). We also recognize this alternative would require crossing a deep ravine with a wetland designation.



**Figure 6. Alternative North-South Connections**

The alternatives shown in figure 6 are suggestions to improve the safety and flow of traffic from West Felida to NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue. However, during the update of the West Felida Circulation Plan, we suggest the traffic planners also think about a secondary North-South alternative to NW 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue, probably on the western side of the above map, and extending as far north and south as would be feasible.

Finally, there is the alternative to do nothing. However, we believe any one of the four issues outlined in this letter is sufficient reason to update the West Felida Circulation Plan and follow through with improvements to West Felida road system. In particular, the current designation of McCann as a ‘circulator’ has resulted in the neglect of McCann, in spite of significant past development and ample opportunity to improve the road system. It is critical that McCann and/or alternative routes be designated as collectors so the County’s processes can function properly.

## **7. Funding**

We anticipate the necessary improvements to the West Felida system will require more than nominal funding. We are concerned that:

1. The next local developers will be assessed a disproportionate share solely because they are first in line after McCann is designated a ‘collector’.
2. We may see strong opposition to McCann being designated a collector, or opposition to improvements in West Felida, from any developer who believes they may be assessed a disproportionate share of the costs.

Since previous West Felida developers failed to fund necessary improvements, we believe the County should step forward and become the primary source of funding. Once specific West Felida improvements have been identified, we request they be put high enough in the traffic priority list to be funded. A secondary source of funding would be new developers, but their share should be proportional by assuming prior developers had been assessed their appropriate share.

## **8. Request for Action**

We request the Clark County Commissioners direct County Staff to update the West Felida Circulation Plan. Concurrent with the update of the West Felida Circulation Plan, we request County Staff to change the designation of McCann Road from circulator to collector; to improve the Level-of-Service at McCann/36<sup>th</sup> Ave. and at 131<sup>st</sup> St/36<sup>th</sup> Ave., including an analysis of the traffic alternatives suggested in section 6 of this overview; to improve the intersection of McCann/43<sup>rd</sup>; and to address the safety issue on McCann between 36<sup>th</sup> and 39<sup>th</sup> Avenues.